788 bees' nests bred of experience in Indian jungles, I was looking round to see where it came from. The noise got nearer and nearer, when six men suddenly appeared round the corner of a zigzag. It was not till I actually saw them that it dawned on me that the noise I had taken for the humming of bees proceeded really from human thro:s reciting prayers in a monotonous mumble. The deception was most perfect. Neither myself nor the Chinamen with me doubted when we first heard the noise that it was a 788 swarm of bees or hornets. The men belonged to the Mo-so tribe and were on a pilgrimage to a temple in the Chien-563 ch'ang valley. This is a race of men I have seen very little of. They appear roughly speaking to inhabit the country north of Li-chiang Fu, and from there westwards towards Wei-hsi and northwards nearly to A-tun-tzŭ. Most, if not all, of them have adopted Tibetan Buddhism. Captain Ryder came across them in the town of Yung-ning (lat. 27° 45′, long. 100° 40′), where they constitute the bulk of the population. By the evidence of their language they are closely connected with the Hsi-fan and Lo-lo races.

The men we met would stop their chaunt for a moment to answer a question, but would begin again at once afterwards. We were evidently getting near a country under Tibetan influence. What Chinaman would think of reciting prayers as he went along the road?

563 The Mo-sos were not the only new race I was to see [263] on this march, for soon afterwards we met some Hsi-fans, carrying loads of a sort of spice called *hua-chiao*, which they grow extensively about here. Just after they had •201 passed us, the last of them, an elderly man, gave vent to his feelings in a loud noise in a high tone of voice, more like a shriek of forced laughter than anything else. I thought at first he was amused at something, possibly at my personal appearance. The Chinese guide said it was their way of singing—a somewhat vague explanation. It was a noise I often heard afterwards among Tibetans, and is simply a means of calling to each other when distance makes a loud yell necessary to attract attention. It sounds a most extraordinary noise at first, but one soon gets accustomed to 000 it in Tibet. One of my Gurkha sepoys told me the people